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TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 7994
INFO RUFHFT/AMCONSUL FRANKFURT 7415
RUFHFG/AMCONSUL LENINGRAD 1436
BT
C O N F I D E N T I A L MOSCOW 02899

DEPT. FOR A/SY/OPS/FO/MSG AND EUR/SOV
FRANKFURT FOR ADS AND CO., CO "A"
LENINGRAD FOR PD AND RSO

E.O. 12356: DECL: OADR
TAGS: ASEC
SUBJECT: ASSAULT ON MARINE CORPORAL JON HILDRETH

REF: KAMMAN-SIMONS TELCON MARCH 6, 1985

1. (U) SUMMARY: AT APPROXIMATELY 0230 HOURS ON MARCH 6, 1985, MARINE CORPORAL JON HILDRETH WAS BRUTALLY ASSAULTED BY TWO UNIDENTIFIED SOVIETS INSIDE THE INTOURIST HOTEL IN MOSCOW. ONLY AFTER SUFFERING A SERIES OF BLOWS WHICH RESULTED IN ABRASIONS TO HIS HEAD, NECK, LEFT ARM, AND CHEST, DID HILDRETH MANAGE TO BREAK FREE OF HIS ATTACKERS, ESCAPE THE HOTEL, AND RETURN TO THE EMBASSY. A SUBSEQUENT EMBASSY INVESTIGATION OF THIS INCIDENT COULD DETERMINE NO PLAUSIBLE REASON FOR THE ASSAULT. END SUMMARY.

2. (C) AT APPROXIMATELY 0230 HOURS, MARCH 6, 1985, MARINE CORPORAL JON HILDRETH, ON AUTHORIZED LIBERTY, WAS LEAVING THE INTOURIST HOTEL ALONE WHEN HE WAS CONFRONTED IN THE MAIN LOBBY OF THE HOTEL BY TWO (2) MALE SOVIETS ATTIRED IN CIVILIAN SUITS. SPEAKING IN FLUENT ENGLISH, THE SOVIETS INSISTED ON SPEAKING WITH HIM. WHEN HILDRETH EXPLAINED THAT HE HAD NO DESIRE TO TALK WITH THEM AND INTENDED ONLY TO RETURN TO THE AMERICAN EMBASSY, THEY AGAIN INSISTED THAT HE TALK WITH THEM, STATING "...THERE IS MUCH TO TALK ABOUT". AT THIS POINT, HILDRETH OBSERVED A PERSON IN THE LOBBY WHO HE BELIEVED TO BE A CANADIAN. (THIS WAS ROBERT J. SHALKA, COUNSELLOR AND CONSUL, CANADIAN EMBASSY.) IN AN EFFORT TO DRAW THIS PERSON'S ATTENTION TO HIS SITUATION, HILDRETH AGAIN CLEARLY STATED IN BOTH ENGLISH AND RUSSIAN HIS INTENTION TO IMMEDIATELY RETURN TO THE AMERICAN EMBASSY. ACCORDING TO ROBERT SHALKA, WHO WAS INTERVIEWED BY THE REPORTING OFFICER ON MARCH 7, HE OBSERVED HILDRETH BEING DETAINED BY THE TWO SOVIETS AND IN AN EFFORT TO ASSIST, MANAGED TO ASK HILDRETH IF HE WANTED SHALKA TO NOTIFY THE AMERICAN EMBASSY. HILDRETH REPLIED

*Betty - for
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IN THE AFFIRMATIVE AND SHALKA IMMEDIATELY REPORTED HILDRETH'S SITUATION TO THE EMBASSY BY TELEPHONE. IN THE MEANTIME, THE SOVIETS FORCED HILDRETH INTO A SMALL ROOM ADJACENT TO THE LOBBY. THERE THEY PROCEEDED TO ASSAULT HIM WITH THEIR FISTS AND FEET. ONLY AFTER RECEIVING A NUMBER OF BLOWS WAS HE ABLE TO BREAK FREE OF HIS ATTACKERS AND IN FLEEING THE ROOM, MET SHALKA AT THE DOORWAY. HILDRETH APPEARED IN GREAT DISTRESS AND INTENT ON LEAVING THE HOTEL AS QUICKLY AS POSSIBLE. SHALKA NOTED THAT UPON HIS ARRIVAL AT THE OFFICE DOORWAY, THE SOVIETS IMMEDIATELY RAISED THEIR HANDS AS IF TO INDICATE THEY HAD NOT TOUCHED HILDRETH. HOWEVER, SHALKA OBSERVED BLOOD DRIPPING FROM HILDRETH'S LIP. HILDRETH IMMEDIATELY TOOK ADVANTAGE OF SHALKA'S INTERVENTION AND RAN OUT OF THE HOTEL. HE SUBSEQUENTLY TOOK A TAXI BACK TO THE EMBASSY AND REPORTED THE INCIDENT.

3. (C) AFTER QUESTIONING BOTH CORPORAL HILDRETH AND THE TWO MARINES WHO WERE WITH HIM AT THE INTOURIST HOTEL UP TO AN HOUR PRIOR TO THE INCIDENT, AS WELL AS INTERVIEWING ROBERT SHALKA, WE BELIEVE THE ASSAULT WAS COMPLETELY UNPROVOKED BY HILDRETH. SHALKA ADVISED THAT HILDRETH WAS PERSONALLY SEEN BY HIM SITTING ALONE IN THE DOLLAR BAR OF THE HOTEL FOR APPROXIMATELY 30-45 MINUTES PRIOR TO THE INCIDENT IN QUESTION, AND THAT HILDRETH'S ACTIONS WERE ENTIRELY NON-PROVOCATIVE.

4. (C) WHILE THE PURPOSE OF THIS ATTACK IS NOT AS YET CLEAR TO US, WE INTEND NEVERTHELESS TO SUBMIT A STRONG PROTEST WITH THE MFA, STATING CLEARLY THAT WE BELIEVE THIS BRUTAL ATTACK WAS OFFICIALLY SANCTIONED AND THAT WE EXPECT SOVIET AUTHORITIES TO ENSURE THAT A REPETITION OF SUCH VIOLENCE NOT OCCUR IN THE FUTURE.

5. (U) A COPY OF OUR NOTE TO THE MFA WILL BE FORWARDED SEPTEL. HARTMAN
END OF MESSAGE

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